

THREAT HIGHLIGHT

ITAC

CIET

Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre

Centre intégré d'évaluation du terrorisme

// 2022-02-08

UNCLASSIFIED//

CANADA: IMVE threats in the midst of anti-vaccine protests in the NCR and across the country

TERRORISM THREAT LEVELS

CANADA ↔ MEDIUM

↔ MEDIUM



Uniformed Personnel

LEGEND: Established ↔ Raised ↑ Lowered ↓ Remains ↔

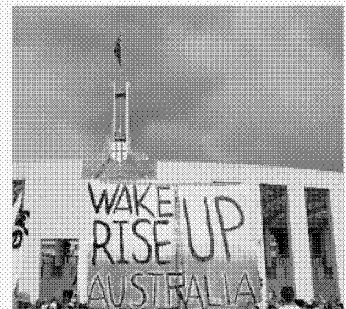
This assessment updates TH22/08 and focuses on the wave of protest in Canada on the weekend of 5 to 6 February in support of the ongoing "Freedom Convoy" to the National Capital Region (NCR). While the protests were initiated by truckers contesting vaccination mandates to cross the US border, events in Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Quebec City and Ottawa have been gathering various groups opposing public health measures. All events remained relatively peaceful, with limited low-level conflict. However, violent online rhetoric and the physical presence of ideological extremists at some gatherings remain a factor of concern.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS ACROSS CANADA

ONTARIO

- **Ottawa** saw approximately 7,000 people protesting and counter-protesting on Saturday, 5 February 2022. There were a number of minor incidents requiring police intervention, but the protests themselves were largely peaceful. Ottawa Police Services received approximately 200 calls about hate-related crimes, leading to 11 investigations. The City of Ottawa declared a state of emergency on Sunday, 6 February 2022. The protest attracted various anti-government figures, including conspiracy theorist Roman Didulo who in June 2021 encouraged her online followers to kill health professionals, burned a Canadian flag and symbolically raised another, declaring the new Kingdom of Canada in Ottawa. The burning of the flag reportedly angered other anti-government protestors.
- **Toronto** saw a protest and counter-protest on Saturday, resulting in two arrests—one related to a smoke bomb and the other to throwing feces.
- **Sarnia** police had to close part of Highway 402 that runs to the border crossing with Michigan because of pedestrians on the road near a convoy of trucks and tractors.

Protests inspired by the Canadian "Freedom Convoy" have also taken place in other countries without reported violence but with anti-authority messaging



Source: The Guardian

ASSESSMENT NOTE: This assessment is based on recent open-source, law enforcement liaison reporting. The information cut-off date is 10:00 hours on 7 February 2022. ITAC has MEDIUM confidence in its assessments due to the dynamic situation.

DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

ALBERTA

- **Coutts** continues to be the site of disruptive activities at the Canada–United States (US) border in protest of the vaccination mandate for truckers. The size of the protest has ebbed and flowed over the last ten days, and there is no information to suggest that organizers intend to end the protest. [REDACTED]
- **Edmonton, Lethbridge and Calgary** saw peaceful protests throughout the weekend. [REDACTED]

QUEBEC

- **Quebec City** saw several large convoys converge outside of the Quebec Provincial Assembly. The QAnon flag was observed, and the extremist group La Meute stated that approximately 100 members participated in the protest, and claimed that the same number attended the Ottawa protest. Police reported only one arrest associated with the Quebec City protest. The protesters left by the end of the day on 5 February, but indicated that they would return in two weeks. [REDACTED]
- **Gatineau** police indicated that the extremist anti-vaccination group Farfadaas, which has been protesting near Chaudière Bridge to Ottawa since the beginning of the “Freedom Convoy,” remained in place, although the group has indicated that it is running out of supplies. [REDACTED]

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- **Vancouver** estimated that there were thousands of protesters in various locations around the city, with some counter-protests. Although the protests were generally peaceful, there were five arrests, including the arrest of an American from Washington State who was arrested with eggs and a knife. [REDACTED]
- **Victoria** saw a protest of approximately 2,500 people, some of whom were counter-protesters. This was the second weekend in a row for protests in front of the British Columbia legislature. [REDACTED]

MANITOBA

- **Winnipeg** protesters experienced minor injuries when an impaired driver drove into a group on the evening of Friday, 4 February 2022. The driver was released from custody on conditions and facing a number of charges. Initial information suggests that this incident is not of national security interest. [REDACTED]

NOVA SCOTIA

- **Halifax** saw a convoy of hundreds of trucks and cars. [REDACTED]

ASSESSMENTS

- Those seeking to undertake legitimate protest are distinct from those actors espousing violent extremism. The convergence of legitimate protest with ideological extremism both online and in cities across the country presents a possible trigger point and opportunity for potential lone actor attackers to conduct a terrorism attack. [REDACTED]
- ITAC continues to assess that a coordinated, complex terrorist attack or a planned storming of Parliament, legislatures or government offices is unlikely at this time. The most likely ideologically motivated violent extremism (IMVE)-related scenario involves an individual or small group using readily available weapons and resources such as knives, firearms, homemade explosives and vehicles in public areas against soft targets, including opposition groups or members of the general public. [REDACTED]
- ITAC judges that the “Freedom Convoy” protests have become a rallying point for anti-government and anti-authority, anti-vaccination, conspiracy theory, and xenophobic groups throughout North America and other Western countries. Convergences and instability of this kind will likely occur throughout 2022. [REDACTED]
- We note that the “Freedom Convoy” is a direct and very public manifestation of the increasingly mainstream legitimization of violence against elected officials and public figures connected to COVID-19 related public health measures. [REDACTED]



Terrorism Threat Levels

Canada

← MEDIUM



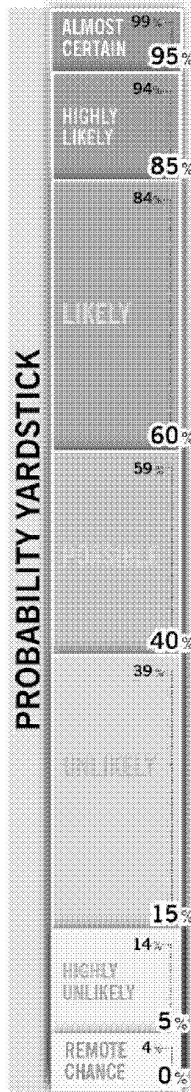
→ MEDIUM

Threat levels as of 1 December 2021.

An act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR.**There is intent *and* capability from both domestic and international extremist actors to commit an act of terrorism in CanadaAn act of terrorism directly affecting *uniformed personnel* in Canada **COULD OCCUR.**

- Intelligence indicates that an individual or group **within Canada** or abroad has the intent *and* capability to commit an act of terrorism in Canada. There remain individuals both in Canada and abroad who advocate violence and aspire to carry out terrorist attacks domestically. ITAC notes that inspired individuals typically act alone or in relatively small groups, and that attack planning can progress quickly, and may go undetected. **ITAC assesses that an act of terrorism could occur in Canada.**
- Propaganda identifying **uniformed personnel** as potential targets continues to be published online. ITAC notes that there are indications of intent to target uniformed personnel in Canada. Notwithstanding, ITAC assesses that, at present, uniformed personnel are more likely to be targeted incidentally while performing their duties. **ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism affecting *uniformed personnel* in Canada could occur.**





ITAC's Probability Yardstick tool contributes to the understanding of the threat by providing readers with a common understanding of ITAC's probability statements.

THREAT LEVEL

LEVELS	DESCRIPTIONS	LANGUAGE
CRITICAL		ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .
HIGH	Intelligence indicates that an individual or group within Canada or abroad has the intent AND capability to commit an act of terrorism.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .
MEDIUM		ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .
LOW	Intelligence indicates that an individual or group within Canada or abroad has either the intent OR capability to commit an act of terrorism.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .
VERY LOW	There is no intelligence indicating a terrorist threat.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .

ITAC's Threat Level chart defines each threat level and describes the assessed likelihood of a violent act of terrorism. ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. Threat levels are determined based on several factors, including current intelligence, recent events, and the assessed intent, capabilities and opportunity available to terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that its information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning. See Confidence Levels.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL

CRITERIA	INTELLIGENCE	SOURCES	ASSUMPTION	REASONING
HIGH	multiple reports; well-corroborated information; range of reporting types; historical understanding of the issue; good understanding of the risk of deceptive reporting	proven and accurate	few; minimal intelligence gaps	strong logical inferences developed through analytic techniques or repeatable methodology
MEDIUM	multiple reports; partially corroborated plausible information; some historical understanding of the issue; some risk of undetected deceptive reporting	proven and semi-proven sources that have been fairly accurate	several, not critical to the analysis; some intelligence gaps	includes weak logical inferences developed through analytic techniques or repeatable methodology
LOW	few or single-source reports; uncorroborated information; some historical understanding of the issue; considerable risk of undetected deceptive reporting	semi-proven sources that have been somewhat accurate, or new, unproven sources	many; some critical to the analysis	dominated by weak inferences developed through analytic techniques or repeatable methodologies

ITAC's Confidence Levels chart outlines statements that accompany each ITAC product to inform the reader of ITAC's degree of confidence in its assessments. These levels are based on an evaluation of the available intelligence, the sources, and ITAC's assumptions and reasoning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

ITAC's Terrorist Group Capabilities chart describes the capabilities of a terrorist group to conduct an attack in a particular country where the group has already demonstrated intent. This metric is based on the methodology used to establish ITAC's terrorism threat levels. For the purposes of this metric, capability is defined as "the ability, capacity, competence or qualification" of a group to perpetrate a particular attack.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Documents marked "For Official use Only" may be shared with Government of Canada partners. It is important to note that while they are UNCLASSIFIED, they are RESTRICTED and not releasable to the public; nor should they be sent/forwarded to personal email addresses.

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

This document is the property of the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre (ITAC). Prepared by ITAC, it is derived from various sources with information effective as of the date of publication. It is provided to your agency/department in confidence and may be further disseminated by your agency/department to those with the need to know. It must not be reused in any way, in whole or in part, without the consent of the originator.

Any feedback should be directed via email to ITAC at itac@ci.gc.ca

This document constitutes a record which may be subject to mandatory exemption under the *Access to Information Act* or the *Privacy Act*. The information or intelligence may also be protected by the provisions of the *Canada Evidence Act*. The information or intelligence must not be disclosed or used as evidence without prior consultation with ITAC.